St. Charles Seminary Library
Carthagena, Ohio

JAN 9 '59

THE GENIUS OF MATISSE
— Betty Kaufman

THE

# Commonweal

## *The Expansion of Christianity*

**by Christopher Dawson**

## What Ever Happened to Radio?

**by Donald P. Costello**

## The French Pendulum

**by Robert Barrat**

*A POEM FOR EPIPHANY . . . . . by Sister Mary Honora, O.S.F.*
*PORTRAIT OF A PRIEST . . . . . by Philip Deasy*
*GALLOWS HUMOR . . . . . by William James Smith*
*CIVIL WAR NARRATIVE . . . . . by John Cournos*

olume LXIX, No. 15 January 9, 1959 Twenty-Five Cents

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# If You Didn't Get The Commonweal for Christmas

. . . and don't subscribe yourself right now, why not give yourself the gift of a subscription to begin the New Year? It is a sure way of providing yourself with a wealth of good reading at a trial subscription price which will save over 38 per cent of the newsstand price.

Each week your subscription will bring you literate articles on issues of the day by leading American and European writers; outspoken editorials on the news of the week; John Cogley's column; and frequent dispatches from Britain, France, Italy and other lands by such men as Michael P. Fogarty, Robert Barrat, and Gunnar D. Kumlien.

You will also receive literary articles and reviews of current fiction and non-fiction by alert and forthright critics, week by week; The Stage by Richard Hayes; The Screen by Philip T. Hartung. If you take an interest in the arts, you will especially welcome The Commonweal's winter and spring series of attractive book issues.

The two dollars you venture now in accepting the attached trial offer promises you ample returns —over three hundred pages of rewarding reading. Send for your trial subscription early this New Year.

**SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY OFFER:**
**13 ISSUES FOR $2**
**FOR NEW SUBSCRIBERS ONLY**

THE COMMONWEAL, 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y.

Enclosed is $2. Send The Commonweal for the next 13 weeks to:

NAME _____

STREET _____

CITY _____ ZONE _____ STATE _____

1/9/59


# THIS WEEK


Week by Week 375

The Expansion of Christianity
*by Christopher Dawson* 378

What Ever Happened to Radio?
*by Donald P. Costello* 381

The French Pendulum
*by Robert Barrat* 383

Person to Person
*by John Cogley* 385

The Stage
*by Richard Hayes* 386

The Screen
*by Philip T. Hartung* 386

Of Note: Liturgy and Mass Culture
*by Andrew M. Greeley* 387

Books 392

Art: The Happy Genius of Henri Matisse
*by Betty Kaufman* 394



THE COMMONWEAL
386 FOURTH AVENUE
NEW YORK 16

*Editor*
EDWARD S. SKILLIN

*Managing Editor*
JAMES O'GARA

*Associate Editors*
JAMES FINN
RICHARD HORCHLER

*Drama Critic:* RICHARD HAYES; *Movie Critic:* PHILIP T. HARTUNG; *Social Action:* JOHN C. CORT; *Paris:* ROBERT BARRAT; *Rome:* GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN; *Great Britain:* MICHAEL P. FOGARTY

JOHN BRUBAKER: *Advertising Manager*

Entered as second-class matter at the post office at Orange, Conn., under the act of March 3, 1879. Printed in the U.S.A. and published weekly at 440 Post Road, Orange, Conn. by the Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N.Y. MUrray Hill 3-9685.



Copyright © 1958 The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc.



U. S. and Canada, $8 a year. Foreign, $10. Single copies 25¢



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE
# Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-FIFTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

## week by week

### A TIME FOR RESOLUTIONS

THE BEGINNING of a new year is traditionally a time for stock-taking, for appraisal of one's past, present and future life-conditions. It is most of all, perhaps, a time for resolutions.

As with people, so with nations; and in recent days America's commentators and pundits have been busy publicly auditing the nation's books in almost every sphere of activity. Newpapers, magazines, radio, television—all the communication media—have carried innumerable "where do we stand?" and "what can we look forward to?" analyses of every kind of national problem, large and small, foreign and domestic.

In them, as we might expect, a multiplicity of viewpoints on so variegated and complex a subject as the national scene in its entirety has produced a great diversity of attitude and conclusion. Nevertheless, despite the expected diversity of views, there is still an extraordinary degree of unanimity in all the reports and predictions. Almost every analyst of America's public concerns declares an overwhelming sense of urgency at the problems that confront us. In the area of foreign policy alone, for instance, the challenges facing the Western nations are huger and more critical than ever before—and of course the heaviest burden of responsibility in meeting these challenges inescapably falls to the United States, the richest, strongest and most influential of the Western nations.

Western firmness in Berlin has apparently reduced for the time being the likelihood of an open East-West clash in Germany, but this amounts to no more than minimal consolation. Soviet pressure against the West continues to be inexorable and highly dangerous; Soviet foreign policy continues to be positive and aggressive, forcing the Western allies to respond defensively and negatively, in situations manufactured by the U.S.S.R. Recent successes in the United States missile and satellite programs have been heartening, but satisfaction over our own impressive progress has tended to obscure the significance of the Soviet lead in this field.

And aside from this political and military competition, the "economic offensive" being waged by the Russians promises in 1959 to be even bigger, bolder and more dangerous than before. The Soviets' announced budgets are notoriously unreliable, of course, but it is significant that their spending plan for this year calls for staggering increases in government spending to expand production facilities—nearly eighteen billion dollars more than the amount spent in 1958.

THE WEST'S crisis with Communist China over the offshore islands seems—temporarily—to have melted away. But every report from China emphasizes that the People's Republic grows daily in its fierce determination to wipe out Western influence not only in its own area but throughout Asia. The incredible mobilization of six hundred million people for "the great leap forward" is like an Orwellian nightmare, but deplore it as we may, question the statistics as we may, there is no doubt the Communists have created in China a new and mighty nation, surging to a position of tremendous world power.

All of Southeast Asia now lives in the shadow of this Chinese colossus, struggling against ever increasing pressures from Peiping, not least of which are China's own "economic offensive" and its own program—fantastic as the idea is—of aid to underdeveloped countries. Against this background, the dismal prospect for India, the Asian nation which has rejected Communism and is attempting to make its "great leap forward" by means of "democratic



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

socialism," becomes more serious than ever. India is in great danger of being lost to the West.

Any illusion of calm in the Middle East offered by our policy-makers has been shattered by the recent Communist success in Iraq. Reports from the Middle East agree that the outlook there is for agitation, turmoil—and probably Communist advances. Indeed the whole vast continent of Africa promises to be a focus of world conflict—hot or cold—as the interests of East and West, nationalism, Nasserism and Communism all collide.

Even this much of a survey leads inevitably to a terribly dangerous, terribly grave world outlook. These are truly dark times, and if we are to survive them, with the ideals of life that we believe in, much will be demanded of us. Our success is not inevitable, but if it is to be achieved at all it will only be done with heroic efforts of mind and heart—with prayer as though all depended on God, with work as though all depended on us.

This is the sum of our political stock-taking in the realm of foreign affairs. The conclusions are hard, and they are made infinitely more somber by the difference between them and the conclusions reached by our national leaders. What needs to be done in 1959, we are told, is not to undertake massive emergency measures to meet the Commnunist flood all over the world, not to expand the scope and pace of our efforts in every area of the struggle, not to tighten our belts and sacrifice for what is worth sacrificing for. In 1959, our leaders say, we must balance the budget, cut back our efforts, economize here, there and everywhere. And we must smile, we are told, and not listen to the prophets of doom and gloom.

## ANOTHER FAMILY, SAME FIGHT

LAST WEEK, in an editorial called "Family Fight," we described the efforts of liberal Republican Senators to win better committee assignments and more adequate representation in the Party's leadership. By the time these lines appear, Democratic liberals will be engaged in a similar struggle inside their Party.

With relatively few exceptions, the men who won in November were liberals. In the House in particular there is no doubt that the election results mean a generally more progressive spirit. Nonetheless, new members will find that translating vigorous sentiments into law is not easy when some of the most important committee posts are held by arch-conservatives.

The chairman of the House Rules Committee, for example, is the very conservative Representative Howard Smith of Virginia. Working as the head of a coalition of Southern Democrats and conservative Republicans, and operating with the approval of Speaker Sam Rayburn, Congressman Smith has been able to keep almost any legislation he dislikes from reaching the floor of the House for debate. In the past, liberal Congressmen have been able to do little about this situation except grumble in private; this time they are determined to win either changes in the rules of the House or in the make-up of the Rules Committee. They know the odds are still very much against them, but the temper of the new members is vigorous and confident, and they may produce some surprises. In any case, win or lose, it looks as if they will put up a fight worth watching.

## THE DANGER IN IRAQ

THE FACT THAT last July's bloody coup in Iraq was the work of Arab nationalists has not prevented the Soviet Union from garnering most of its fruits. Russia has been moving in step by step to within sight of strategic territorial ambitions that go back to Stalin and the Czars. Iraq is also a leading source of oil for Britain and France; its proximity to the fabulous oilfields of tiny Kuwait, and of Iran, might enable a Communist Iraq to control the supply to Western Europe. And if it should go Communist, only a narrow strip of Iranian territory would be needed to give the Soviet Union unimpeded access to the Indian Ocean.

It seems that the Soviet Union has been able to move close to such a prize because the Iraqui Communists were the only political group able to supply Brigadier Abdul Karim Kassem, the leader of the revolt against King Hussein, with any effective organization. The Communist apparatus was able to muster street mobs to support the overthrow—much as they did the other day at the Baghdad airport when mobs stoned Assistant Secretary of State William Rountree on his arrival. Even if the Iraqui Army should remain loyal, there are doubts whether it could—or would—disperse these Communist-led mobs in case of a showdown.

Brigadier Kassem's lack of a trained administrative corps, his inexperience in governing and the elimination of Nationalist personnel by means of successful Soviet *agents provocateurs* have brought Communists to a number of high posts in the Iraqui government, including the Director of Broadcasting and Press Censorship and the Minister of Econom-



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ics. Rebellious Kurds in North Iraq are a special target for the Communists, who are also making headway with influential younger Army officers. Communists are said to have taken over the Iraqui police; they are steadily growing stronger.

Within the country the opposition is poorly organized, divided and off balance. Much of the Army is still loyal. The Pan-Arab Nationalists comprise the strongest opposing political group but they continue to lose ground. In the background are unrelieved conditions characteristic of most of the Middle East: abysmally low wages, destitute peasants and city slum-dwellers, the prevalence of illiteracy and disease. To the minds of many Iraquis any change under whatever auspices could only be for the better. Plentiful and virtually unopposed Communist propaganda could hardly fall upon more fertile soil.

The only force outside the country able to intervene directly in any strength is that headed by Colonel Nasser of the United Arab Republic. The Colonel is backpedaling fast now that the Communists have seized the initiative. But Nasser has become weaker at home and has his hands full with his Syrian domain. For some weeks he has been turning again to the West to counterbalance his deepening dependence on the Soviets.

Much as the stormy Rountree reception was deliberately staged by Communist elements, it did reflect widely held anti-American feeling. Any offer of ours to the Kassem government at this stage would unquestionably be rebuffed. The United States is therefore reduced to working through Nasser, responding to his inquiries with vitally needed wheat shipments, cooperating on the Suez Canal and the Aswan Dam, etc. By itself such a policy can hardly be expected to change things in Iraq much. But it would be effective as part of a constructive, costly and far-seeing American—or U.N.—program for the Middle East.

## THE N.A.A.C.P. IN ARKANSAS

ANOTHER CHAPTER in the harassment of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in the South has just been completed. In a decision that probably surprised no one, the Arkansas Supreme Court held valid Little Rock city ordinances which would compel the N.A.A.C.P. to make public its financial and membership records.

Despite abundant evidence to the contrary, some of the supporters of the Arkansas law apparently cling to the notion that the N.A.A.C.P. is a Communist organization and that publication of its financial records would turn up Moscow gold. Any legitimate organization, they insist, should be quite willing to disclose the information required by the law. Officers of the N.A.A.C.P., on the other hand, are unwilling to disclose details of their membership or supporters; to disclose such information, they say, would expose their supporters to "harassment, economic reprisals and even bodily harm."

Events in recent months, it seems to us, clearly lend support to the N.A.A.C.P. side of this argument, and we therefore hope an appeal of the Arkansas decision will allow the Supreme Court to rule on the matter. If states and local communities can make the exercise of free speech and assembly the occasion for public harassment and intimidation, these Constitutional guarantees certainly lose much of their meaning.

## CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN

WITHOUT WANTING to carp, we must say we are unable to work up much enthusiasm over reports that the United States has developed a cheaper H-bomb by the use of lithium. Heaven knows the cost of modern armaments constitutes a heavy burden, and there are all kinds of ways in which arms money could be better spent. But we cannot forget the fact that each simplification of method or reduction in cost brings that much closer the day when every nation, small or large, will have the H-bomb as a normal part of its arsenal. In a world which has failed to agree on any effective method of control, this prospect is hardly a cheering one, no matter how much we save on each bomb.

---

*Readers of The Commonweal may be particularly interested in a series of three interviews to be televised on the "Catholic Hour" on three succeeding Sundays, January 4, 11, and 18 at 1:30 P.M., E.S.T. Entitled "Freedom and the American Catholic" and produced by N.B.C. in cooperation with the National Council of Catholic Men, these programs will be primarily concerned with the role of the Church in a democratic society. Participating will be Father Walter J. Ong, S.J., of the University of St. Louis, whose most recent article in The Commonweal was "The Reaches of History" in the August 15th issue, and John Cogley, a regular columnist and formerly one of the editors of this magazine, now a member of the staff of the Fund for the Republic.*



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# The Expansion of Christianity

*For twelve centuries Christianity has had an organic relation with the social and moral structure of one particular society of peoples*

by CHRISTOPHER DAWSON

THE POSITION of Christianity in the world today has been rarely considered by modern historians. It is none the less a question of central importance for the understanding of modern civilization. For twelve centuries Christianity has been the religion of a culture—that is to say, it has had an organic relation with the social and moral structure of one particular society of peoples. It has held somewhat the same place in Europe that Islam has held in Western Asia, Hinduism in India, or Confucianism in China. It has been the official creed of Western man; it has molded his institutions, ruled his education and created or influenced his moral values and his spiritual ideals.

During the last two centuries the bonds of this organic union have been loosened and modern civilization has been progressively detached from its religious roots. Yet at the same time this has not involved the disappearance of Christianity as a living religion—on the contrary, these centuries have witnessed a remarkable expansion of Christianity throughout the world, an expansion which is partly due to direct missionary activity and partly to the extension of Western civilization across the Atlantic and the colonization of the empty spaces of the world by peoples of European stock and Christian tradition.

What is the significance of this twofold and apparently contradictory process? Is this modern expansion of Christianity merely the religious aspect of the world hegemony achieved by Western civilization in the eighteenth and nineteenth century? Or does it portend the advent of a new and truly world-wide Christendom in which Christianity will achieve a new organic relation with the world civilization of the future?

There is much to be said for each of these alternatives, but hitherto the question has never been adequately discussed. In particular, there have been few attempts to study the expansion of Christianity in the last one hundred and fifty years, apart from Professor Latourette's massive seven-volume *History of the Expansion of Christianity*.

First of all we must recognize the ambivalent character of the nineteenth century. This period has seldom been regarded as a great religious age, and has more often been viewed as an irreligious century, the age which saw the passing of the old order in Church and State and the birth of the new scientific and industrial civilization. Yet there are some, like Professor Latourette, who take a very different point of view. For them the nineteenth century was preeminently an age of hope and unlimited opportunity for spiritual as well as material achievement. And it is certainly true that it has only been in the last century and a half that Christianity, for the first time in its history, transcended the limits of a particular culture and became a world-wide movement which reached every continent, and almost every people and language.

In the nineteenth century this expansion was very closely linked with the colonial and economic expansion of the Western peoples—so closely that it has often been regarded as the same process in a religious form. In the present century, however, under the impact of the new non-occidental nationalist movements, the connection between Christianity and the expansion of the West has been weakened. The leadership in the missionary Churches is passing from the foreigner to the native element. But at the same time the advance of Christianity has continued with increasing intensity. In the last thirty years the percentage of Christians among non-occidental peoples has been doubled or more than doubled in spite of the fact that the new

Mr. Dawson, a frequent contributor, is the first occupant of the Charles Chauncey Stillman Chair of Roman Catholic Theological Studies at Harvard Divinity School. This is an excerpt from his forthcoming book, *The Movement of World Revolution*. Copyright 1959, Sheed and Ward.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

political and social movements which have been characteristic of the age have been unfriendly or openly hostile to the Christian faith.

THIS IN ITSELF is a remarkable achievement, and at first sight it seems to justify the optimism with which some Christians face the prospect of the decline of the West. But it is as yet too soon to say whether the Christian penetration of the non-European world is profound or superficial. Our views on this question will depend on our view of the nineteenth-century development from which it sprang. And the degree of one's optimism will be especially determined by the judgment one passes on the specifically "Anglo-Saxon" type of Christianity which contributed so much, materially, morally and culturally, to the great movement of expansion of missionary activity in the last one hundred and fifty years.

It is truly an astonishing record. The religion of the old world, and especially the sectarian Christianity of the British Isles, was sown broadcast in the virgin soil of America, and produced new varieties which in turn were propagated round the world till they came back to Europe once more. The Schwenkfeldians, "the Confessors of the Glory of Christ," have vanished from their native Silesia and survive in Pennsylvania, while there are still disciples of the English prophetess Mother Anne Lee who maintain their strict community life in the State of Maine. On the other hand, the Seventh Day Adventists, who appeared as a tiny sect in New England in the middle of the nineteenth century, have expanded steadily in all directions, from China to Peru, until by the middle of this century they had reached two hundred and ninety-five lands and five hundred and four languages. And the same intense missionary activity is shown by the other sects of American origin, such as the Mormons, the Christian Scientists and the body that is known as "Jehovah's Witnesses."

No doubt none of these bodies is representative of the main tradition of American Christianity. All, however, possess the missionary impulse and the power of expansion which is lacking in some of the more classical types of American Protestantism, notably in the case of the Unitarians, the Church of William Ellery Channing and Emerson, which has made such a considerable contribution to American religion and life.

In reading the history of the geographical expansion of Christianity, we cannot be satisfied with quantitative standards. At every stage we are faced with the problem of quality, with the nature of the religion which is diffused and the character of the men who are diffusing it. At every stage we must ask, what was it that spread? By what processes did it spread? What effect did it have on its new environment and vice versa? And why has the process of expansion sometimes been arrested or reversed? But it is not easy to answer these questions. Indeed nowhere is the apparent irrationality of history more apparent than in this field. Why was the Church of Cyprian and Augustine extinguished in North Africa, while the Church of Abyssinia survives to this day? Why did the Pitcairn Islanders become Seventh Day Adventists, and the Tonga Islanders Wesleyans? Why have the flourishing Nestorian Churches of Eastern Asia disappeared except in Malabar, where it is no longer Nestorian but Monophysite? These are historical accidents, like the survival of Buddhism in the Nogai Steppes in Russia or the Albanian Uniats of Southern Italy.

But we need some deeper and more universal cause to explain the steady westward trend of Christianity and the fact that the great modern expansion has been almost solely by its two Western forms, Roman Catholic and Protestant. For it is at first sight most surprising that the reaction of oriental nationalism against the West has brought no expansion to the Eastern forms of Christianity; it is from the Western Missions, and especially those of America, that the new Christendom of the Far East and of Africa is derived.

Sun Yat-sen was the pupil of the Anglicans. The Soong family and Chiang Kai-shek were Methodists of the American denomination. Even in Japan, where the conflict with the West has been sharpest in the past, where the government had done all in its power to incorporate the Christians into the totalitarian national community before the collapse of the Japanese Empire in 1945, the influence of Western Christianity remained strong; and Toyohiko Kagawa, who was an outstanding figure in the Christian national movement, was characteristically Western in his religious approach to the social problem.

NO DOUBT this expansion of Western Christianity owed much to the political and economic expansion of Western civilization. But this is not the whole explanation. It was due even more to the inner vitality of the forces of Christianity which had found a new social expression in the changed environment of the new world. In the English-speaking world during the last two centuries Christianity has been free to develop in its own way by its own resources without state control or political interference. In other words, the pattern of Church and State as fixed by the legislators of the later Roman Empire and the Carolingians was replaced by a new type of voluntary organization which has provided the pattern for the new Churches of the new non-European world. Yet at the same time there was no complete break with the past, and the Churches of America remained in full communion with their parent Churches of the old world.

At first sight this development seemed to mark the victory of the Protestant over the Catholic type of



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Christianity. But, as the nineteenth century proceeded, it was seen that this was not the case, and in the twentieth century it became clear that the Catholic Church was not only able to adapt itself to the new pattern, but actually derived fresh strength and energy from the changed conditions. This is shown most strikingly in the United States itself, where Catholicism began as the unpopular religion of a minute and unprivileged alien minority and where it has grown until it is by far the largest and most powerful of the American denominations, numbering far more than the combined total of the Congregationalists, the Episcopalians and the Presbyterians, who among them represent the older traditions of American religion.

A similar situation is to be found in the Far East, Australia and Africa, where the absence of state support seems to stimulate rather than check the advance of Christianity. Here also the nineteenth century was the great age of Protestant expansion, while in the twentieth century the advance of Catholicism has been even more rapid. And the result has been that, as Professor Latourette remarks, "For the first time in its history Christianity was becoming really worldwide and not a colonial or imperial extension, ecclesiastically speaking, of an occidental faith. Indeed in this it was unique. No other religion has ever achieved such world-embracing dimensions. We may go farther and say that no set of ideas, not even the widely propagated Communism of the period, had ever been so extensively represented by organized groups or so rooted among so many different peoples."

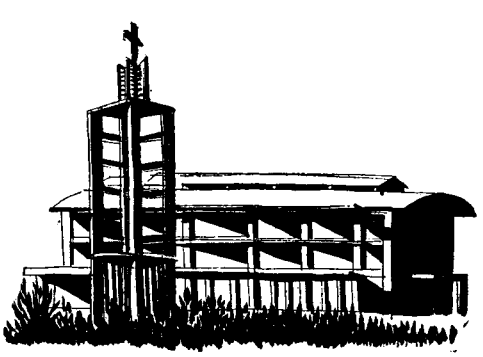
THIS advance of Christianity into new fields has, however, been accompanied by a recession in Christendom itself, where the old type of a society that was traditionally and culturally Christian has been destroyed or threatened by the rise of the totalitarian state and the drastic secularization of society and culture. The overt persecution of religion in Communist Russia and, in the past, in Nazi Germany, may be a transitory phenomenon, but the tendency to the secularization of culture is continuous and universal and there is no sign of any return to the ideal of a positive Christian culture, such as Mr. T. S. Eliot has described in his *Idea of a Christian Society*. Everywhere Christians, whether Orthodox, Roman Catholic or Protestant, are tending to be self-conscious minorities set in an alien or hostile world.

This trend has been undoubtedly strengthened by the catastrophic events of the last few decades which have shown how fragile is the barrier which separates the highest material civilization from the lowest depths of destructiveness and inhumanity. Already in the years between the two world wars there was a strong tendency to reject the liberal optimism of nineteenth-century Protestantism in favor of the uncompromising Barthian theology of crisis which has had such a wide influence on religious thought both in Europe and America. This tendency has been even more accentuated by the destructive effects of World War II and the threat of atomic warfare which now hangs over the world.

The result has been to discredit, in some degree at least, that alliance of the forces of religious idealism and humanitarian reform which contributed so much to Protestant missionary activity from the time of Wilberforce and Buxton to that of the Christian Student Movement and the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work. At the same time the field of voluntary social activity has been restricted, and in some cases completely closed, by the extension of state action and the determination of the totalitarian socialist and nationalist parties to control every possible channel of social influence. This determination of the modern secularist, either to confine the Church to the society or to use it as the obedient servant of the totalitarian state, threatens the freedom of Christian life to a degree in which it has never been threatened before.

The problems involved by this new situation have as yet not been fully realized by public opinion, except in reference to some particular conflict. Yet it is clear that even though National Socialism has been destroyed and Communism seems to have adopted a new policy towards religion, these problems will remain, and must have a profound effect on the expansion of Christianity. It is too soon to say whether they will produce a major recession of Christianity which will counterbalance the gains of the last century and a half, or whether they point towards a situation like that of the early centuries of our era, when Christianity first developed its world mission as a vigorous and persecuted underground movement.

It is impossible to give a confident answer to these questions, for the forces that are involved are too unpredictable and mysterious. Nevertheless, if one's personal sympathies are with the new voluntary type of missionary Christianity, rather than with the traditional European pattern of hereditary Christian culture, the prospect of a shifting of the center of gravity from Europe to the non-European world will not seem an alternative greatly to be feared.





LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

*Radio has paid a ruinous price for its survival*

# What Ever Happened to Radio?

by DONALD P. COSTELLO

RADIO is still here. It has been resurrected from its own ashes; but not as a phoenix—more like a cinder. In the early and middle 1950's radio was indeed in ashes: Jack Benny, Red Skelton, Bob Hope, and the public had all fled to television, and network time sales and profits followed suit. Prophets were looking to the death of radio with the same assurance that they had summoned, earlier, in predicting a complete radio-caused social revolution. But the mass media tend to plod along, muddling through, adapting themselves accidentally, rather than with foresight, to the changing times.

And adapt radio did. As the radio networks with their old formulas fell before the pressures of television, radio found itself a new kind of medium. No longer was it family entertainment; no longer was it a basic means of communication on the national level; no longer was it *listened* to: it had become a kind of personal companion droning to one person at a time, a chattering, musical background to other activities. Radio found itself going where television could not go: in automobiles, to the beach, on the patio, to the sinkful of dirty dishes. And in the midst of its death rattle, radio heard a new sound: rock and roll, which it fitted neatly into its new "top records" or "music and news" format. Now radio could be snapped on or off at any time, with no loss of continuity; now radio didn't have to be listened to, but merely tolerated in the background, to save a fidgety America from the horrors of silence.

It was the independent station which adopted "music and news," and it was the independent station which saved radio—while it killed almost everything which was worth saving. As the big networks skidded downward, with losses estimated at fifty million dollars gross revenue of billings in the last ten years, the small, independent radio stations, with no imagination, no variety of programming, no real attention to the F.C.C.'s demand for "public service," flourished as never before. The networks made some frantic attempts to recapture local audiences, but the more discriminating listeners had already abandoned standard radio, and those who listened at all had transferred to the local stations. The time sales of the independents rose even more than the time sales of the networks declined, and radio rose from apparent death to become physically healthier (but more mentally barren) than it ever had been.

But the price radio had to pay for this financial health was a turn to almost unrelieved insipidity. That peculiar American phenomenon, the disk-jockey, rules the ether waves, and spends more time with many American wives than do their husbands. But the disk-jockey is ruled not by the American housewife, but by the American teenager. Under the new formula of playing the "top forty" tunes, local radio has become subservient to the record industry, and it is the baby-sitter class which rules the record industry. Thus teenage taste (as one more aspect, perhaps, of America's idealization of youth) now has the controlling hand in the creation of much of America's popular culture.

The disk-jockeys, alas, are hardly less destructive than the music they play. A kind of cult grows from want-ads like this one from a trade paper: "Radio station will pay $15,000 for bright, breezy rhyming jock ('All the rage, Patti Page') with fast line of chatter." The chatter is usually hip and phony and patronizing, giving a gloss to the emptiness of the music, and treating the whole pop music business with a deadly, if somewhat illiterate, pretension. The satirist Mort Sahl tells of a sinking ship, and of the decision that the passengers would be saved in inverse proportion to their contribution to society. A fight then ensued as to who would be first—a used car salesman or a disk-jockey.

THE "music and news" formula really means "music." The news is usually squeezed into inflexible five-minute spots, with the disk-jockey or, in larger stations, another announcer reading snips taken here and there from the news wire. Public service announcements—if they exist at all—are single sentences about the Red Cross or the Community Fund. In a recent check of ten Atlanta radio stations, only four passed the very mild F.C.C. "public service" requirements; the other six had their licenses revoked. But such

Mr. Costello writes movie criticism for *Today* magazine. This is his first appearance in The Commonweal.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

F.C.C. watchfulness is rare. Public service announcements are never long enough to dispel the drowsy fog created by the automatic repetition of one record and a few commercials, one record and a few commercials. One Chicago station follows each record with three commercials, for a total of about half music and half commercials (the latter of which, it must be admitted, are often music of comparable quality to the "entertainment"). There are, of course, exceptions here and there to this formula of the "music and news" independent station. But they remain exceptions, having no effect on the mass level.

One exception to the formula, however, seems to be growing into a new movement in radio. N.B.C.'s pitch to advertisers has been, "If you sell white buckskin shoes and bubble gum, by all means use a jukebox station." And the high-domo of popular music, Mitch Miller, complained to a convention of disk jockeys: "You carefully built yourselves into the monarchs of radio and then you went and abdicated—abdicated your programming to the corner record shop, to the pre-shave crowd that makes up twelve per cent of the country's population and zero per cent of its buying power, once you eliminate pony-tail ribbons, popsicles and peanut brittle."

Subsequently, as if in response to these warnings, a new "statistical approach to culture" grew up among independent *chains* of stations. These independent chains have tried an "objective approach" to programming, balancing radio fare with one rock and roll, one old standard, one newscast, one local report, one public service announcement, regular specialties such as "Pet Peeve," "Bright Sayings of Children" and "Smile File"—all according to a rigid formula which is supposed to cut across the board, creating, pretentiously, a "new sound," which is intended to be intolerable to no one, but which in practice, I would imagine, really pleases no one.

This new approach has captured many listeners who had not given up radio entirely, who wanted background noise less obtrusive than the repetition of the "top forty." The success of this independent chain formula has caused *Fortune* to lick its chops over the "sure-fire program mixture" and to report the motto of the mother station of the Bartell Group (WOKY in Milwaukee): "Let's make nothing but money." But, successful or not, the "new sound" is still a stultifying assembly-line approach to culture and entertainment. It is akin to the innocuous "Functional FM" music which is piped into chain stores and buses, and which is little more than noise on a bleary, foggy, almost subliminal level.

At any rate, it seems certain that network radio, with its possibilities for social, political, educational and cultural achievement, is dead. It has been predicted that now radio will be able to serve minority tastes, to look away from the great mass which is served by other media, and to concentrate on specialized interests—good music, sports, politics, drama, foreign language. But the new local radio which has been resurrected from the ashes of the old national radio has shown little movement in the direction of snaring one relatively small but intensely loyal group of listeners. The "music and news" formula, with its few variations, has a deadening sameness; almost every station is still trying to appeal to an amorphous mass, imitatively, in precisely the same way that the other stations are trying to do it.

The only important departure from this eventually self-defeating lack of initiative (much like the Westerns on T.V.) is to be found in the few "fine arts" stations —usually on FM—which have been springing up around the country. The most successful, Chicago's WFMT, which on weekends matches the audience of the network stations, is also the highest quality, with full-length tapes of all the major music festivals, dramatizations of *The Canterbury Tales,* readings of novels (e.g., *The Catcher in the Rye*), periodic series which have played all the recorded music of Bartok, Stravinsky and Mozart, and similar offerings. Of comparable quality—if perhaps a little too self-conscious—is Berkeley-San Francisco's listener-supported KPFA, and high quality, specialized stations are also successful on AM in such cities as New York (WQXR and WNYC), and Philadelphia (WFLN); and on FM in Milwaukee (WFMR), San Diego (KFSD) and Boston (five cultural stations founded by Boston University).

But not too much should be made of these. A recent private survey makes it clear that there are no more than a hundred radio stations in America doing any substantial amount of good music broadcasting—of more than four thousand. Because all of the FM channels are not yet assigned, it is possible that more stations will recognize the wisdom of specialization, but it is not this new broadcasting method itself (most of FM merely duplicates AM broadcasting), but the men who control the stations who will decide the future of quality radio broadcasting.

Any listener who practices selection can find enough broadcasting services to satisfy his needs for noise, entertainment or enrichment, although he may not get a program suited to his tastes exactly when he wants it. As for me, radio satisfies me as an individual, but not as a member of society. In my public role, I must agitate for better and more varied programming, elimination of corrupting pop music, and a higher-toned culture throughout. Americans must be made to realize, as Gilbert Seldes has said, that "the effect of the public arts cannot be escaped by turning off the radio or television set, by refusing to go to the movies; neither our indifference nor our contempt gives us immunity against them."



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

*De Gaulle's landslide represented a national swing to the Right*

# The French Pendulum

by ROBERT BARRAT

IN LAST NOVEMBER'S elections, as in 1951 but directly opposite to 1956, the pendulum swung back brutally to the Right. General de Gaulle, who sought to avoid having to deal with an ineffectual parliament, unhappily found himself confronted by a compact group of a hundred and eighty deputies belonging to the party of M. Soustelle. The other day a Gaullist told me that fifty of these might be considered convinced followers of the General, but that the others were either marked fascists, conservatives, or simply ambitious men who got aboard the bandwagon. (J. J. Servan Schreiber said recently in the *Express* that he knew three of these deputies who had gone to Algeria as veritable gunmen.)

Two years ago we were close to a Popular Front government, with a hundred forty-five Communists, eighty-eight Socialists and fifty-six Radicals. Today there are only ten Communists, forty Socialists and thirteen Radicals in the National Assembly. Are the French people really so changeable?

The line-up would have been quite different if the deputies had been elected by proportional representation. Doubtless de Gaulle thought that a single-name ballot, in which citizens voted for candidates who were locally well known, would diminish the effects of a tidal wave which the September 28 referendum already had indicated. But things did not work out that way. The country did not want to save its well-known personalities: three hundred eighty-seven deputies bit the dust. The most spectacular defeats were those of such former ministers or Premiers as Joseph Laniel, Pierre Mendès-France, Edgar Faure, Lacoste, Pineau, André Morice, Defferre, Mitterrand and Jacques Duclos. There is nothing to lament in the fate of most of those who were defeated, but the vox populi seems to have been particularly harsh on such men as Defferre and Mendès-France, who always played an honest role in the Assembly. Their voices will be greatly missed in a Chamber where the opposition of fifty members will have no really able leaders.

The reasons for this upset are simple. The French people voted for a new party which was able to bring forward new candidates claiming adherence to General de Gaulle, and within two years five million votes shifted from the Left and the Center to the Right. Nevertheless, the votes of many citizens who voted for the Gaullists or the Independents had no Rightist or fascist connotations—just as the three million who supported the Radical party of Mendès-France in 1956 had no affinity for the notorious anti-clerical philosophy of the Radicals. And now they voted for change, expressing confidence in one man: de Gaulle. They gave him a massive majority so that the executive would not be prevented by a splintered legislature from taking the action they felt was needed. The French people had had enough of this inaction in the last ten years. It would be an exaggeration to say that they now found democracy hateful, but it is clear that they could no longer countenance the sort of parliamentary regime that had been operating in France since 1947.

They preferred to ignore, if they remembered at all, that de Gaulle and his R.P.F. had been partly responsible for the decline of parliamentary institutions and the weakening of the government. "Today," they said, "France can wait no longer. The war in Algeria never ends, needed construction is at a standstill, entrance into the European Common Market is imminent. And all these urgent problems must be resolved. We can no longer afford to have parliamentary governments which are simply geometric configurations of opposing forces. France needs to be governed."

As in 1851 with Prince Louis-Napoléon, or in 1940 with Marshal Pétain, the French people have therefore decided to hand over to a single man the responsibility of directing their destiny, a task which their representatives had proved incapable of accomplishing.

CAN THIS BE a sign of a dangerous decline in the French sense of civic responsibility? Are the French people ready to accept in the near future a dictatorship or totalitarianism? I believe that to think so would be a mistake, as things now stand. Many democrats voted Gaullist because they could see no other viable solution. Even among those who had protested most vigorously against the conditions under which de Gaulle took power, and who had campaigned

M. Barrat, long associated with the *Centre des Intellectuels Français*, is The Commonweal's regular correspondent in Paris.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

most actively against the new Constitution, there were many who sincerely believed that the General was the only man capable of making the army in Algeria obey orders and thus capable of saving France from a military dictatorship.

"My son is twenty-two. He has been fighting in Algeria for fourteen months," a woman who is in no sense a reactionary recently told me. "What would happen if we were to have another government like those of the Fourth Republic? With de Gaulle there is a chance that the fighting will be stopped and our boys sent home. I voted for the candidate who proclaimed his intention of following de Gaulle."

These are some of the psychological reasons which explain the drastic shift of opinion the French electorate registered in September and November. The question now is whether this swing of the pendulum is so powerful that it will carry de Gaulle to a destination far beyond his original goal.

The sincerity of his desire to ring down the curtain on the Algerian drama by means of liberal solutions can hardly be questioned. Despite certain unfortunate expressions, such as his allusion to the white flag, symbol of surrender, his press conference of October 23 marked an enormous step forward. And it is regrettable that the Algerian Nationalists did not accept the opportunity he offered and send their representatives to Paris to open official negotiations with the French government.

It must not be forgotten, however, that de Gaulle has his opportunistic side; the firmness of his proposals and the classical conciseness of his language conceal an approach which is often indecisive and reflects more the political situation of the moment than any firmly held design. This avowed enemy of the European Defense Community and of Little Europe, who people feared would reenact his famous 1945 trip to Moscow, has now become a supporter of rapprochement with West Germany, as is shown by his two meetings with Adenauer. The man who several years ago raised an anguished voice of warning against the atomic peril has not hesitated to give a green light to the production of a French A-bomb. What guarantee is there that, if he comes up against determined resistance on the part of the powerful French ultras and the army in Algeria, he will not jettison his plan for a liberal solution of the Algerian problem? For several months he has been temporizing in this matter. His speeches have been courageous indeed, but they have not been followed up by steps conducive to winning confidence among the Moslems of Algeria and establishing the psychological and political conditions wherein the most determined of the Nationalists can be persuaded to negotiate.

In this connection the recent electoral consultation in Algeria, except that it was free, was a serious error whose tragic consequences are still unfolding. The French government is now confronted by men who were not only the candidates designated by the French Army but are now legally constituted negotiators in the discussion of the future status of Algeria. Because of this, achievement of a cease-fire with the leaders of the Algerian Nationalists is infinitely more difficult than it would have been if de Gaulle had had the courage—or the wisdom—to call for elections immediately.

The political situation in which the President of the Republic finds himself following the elections to the Chamber of Deputies is hardly likely to bring about solutions. To observe that the powers of that body have been greatly reduced under the new Constitution does not help much, as it is impossible to govern against the wishes of the parliamentary majority. And we know well the tendencies of this majority: a hundred eighty-nine Gaullists and a hundred thirty-two Independents, augmented by seventy ill-chosen deputies from Algeria, comprise a redoubtable instrument of power in the hands of leaders who are quite ready to follow de Gaulle as long as he does things the way they want, but who at any moment can propel him in a direction contrary to his wishes.

Algeria continues to be the key to the future of France. The new Assembly is not to meet until the end of April, and that leaves less than four months in which to discover the way out from a conflict which threatens not only French democracy but also the peace of the world. Much depends on the initiative General de Gaulle will take during this short interval. We shall soon know whether France will recover from its terrible anguish of last May or whether a dangerous period of pronunciamentos is about to begin.

---

## CHARTRES: JULY 1955

Beside the cathedral, boys
are flying their kites,
white, yellow, blue,
their paper wings
like all young things
light in the changing air.

Above them, small, growing smaller,
swallows and chimney-swifts
break like the noise of bells
and girls
on the gravel paths
watch for a falling star.

The kites tremble and run
in the last light,
mysterious fish,
endlessly rising, endlessly easing down.
Here is Our Lady
asleep; there is the queen of Judah.

DAVID CHANDLER.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# PERSON TO PERSON

IN HIS CONTRIBUTION to *Religion in America,* Father Walter J. Ong says: "A democracy may perish in the cataclysm when its citizens come to blows. In the face of this threat dialogue within a democracy does not guarantee peace, but it promotes it. . . . The prelude to war is to halt dialogue, to cease to talk, to break off diplomatic relations."

Dialogue, which Father Ong describes as "speech between man and man," is not easy, especially when it moves beyond points of facile agreement to sensitive spots of disputation. And yet there is no gainsaying the truth in his remark that the halting of dialogue is the prelude to war.

There is a rich scholastic flavor to the word "dialogue." If the word itself suggests intellectual rigidity and the ruthless pursuit of the syllogism, as I am afraid it does to some, then its use may handicap rather than aid the democratic exchange we need. For if there is one thing that can be said about our present pluralism, it is that it includes great differences not only about what is substantive but also what is procedural. We disagree not only on what truth is, but on how it can be reached. The conclusion flowing liquidly from an unassailable major and minor premise is honey to the man in the Scholastic tradition; to the semanticist or the positivist such a conclusion may carry no conviction with it.

In this column at least, I am not concerned with the present state of philosophy in the United States. I am concerned with Father Ong's observation about the urgent need for dialogue despite all the very real difficulties. When he uses the word, Father Ong emphasizes the personal aspect of dialogue. Dialogue is not merely an exchange of arguments such as might be carried on between two Univacs; dialogue involves the meeting of persons. Therein lies its dynamism. The person remains forever a mystery; each one is unique, so it is impossible to predict what will happen when any two persons meet. Some special chemistry takes over that is as unique as the confrontation that produces it. But the important thing is that *persons* are meeting, not abstractions. "So long as we continue talking to one another," Father Ong reminds us, "we cannot be entirely hostile."

Another Jesuit, Father John Courtney Murray, whose approach is quite different from Ong's, also argues for dialogue in *Religion in America.* Father Murray says that the time may have come "when we should endeavor to dissolve the structure of war that underlies the pluralistic society and erect the more civilized structure of the dialogue."

It is not in any simple-minded belief that fundamental differences can, or should, be dissolved that Father Murray makes his plea for dialogue. He does not look forward to some facile and essentially fraudulent "unity" that would blur true differences. Rather, he paints a picture of the only kind of unity which is appropriate to a free, democratic society—the unity of men locked in argument.

Father Murray recalls Newman's remark that the Victorian Protestant "bore a stain upon the imagination" as a result of the Reformation polemic against Catholicism. He goes on to suggest that everyone else probably bears a similar stain. Catholics, Jews and secular humanists all carry with them ancient memories of wrongs committed, injustices done, and hatreds passed on as a bitter legacy from father to son. But, says Murray, it may be that we could all cleanse our imaginations by a work of reason—by dialogue.

I do not know where these two Jesuits had hoped that their observation would lead others. I know where they have led me. They have led me to the belief that Catholics should think less and less in terms of pressure-group activities and power plays and much more of democratic dialogue. More emphasis should be placed on making the Catholic positions on various civic issues understandable and less on backing up these positions with threats of boycott and blacklist.

I am also led to conclude that American Catholics should start giving up some of their separatist activities and participate more enthusiastically than they have up to now in general cultural efforts. It is not that there is anything wrong, or even undemocratic, in Catholic Hairdressing Societies and Catholic Cooking Guilds—but there is just not enough energy to go around.

It is not for me to say what failings other groups may find if they look for them. I suspect, though, that an examination of conscience might bring out the fact that there is a great deal to be said for Father Murray's claim that imaginations of all have been stained by history and intelligences clouded by ancient prejudices. There is something, too, in the idea that we are *all* so busy fighting for our own causes that we rarely stop to listen to each other—or believe each other when we do listen, for we are all too ready to burrow for unworthy motives; we often act as if the very heavens would fall in were we to recognize a contrary claim or give up hallowed sectarian prejudices.

It is here that Father Ong's emphasis on the personal seems so beautifully pertinent. Everyone knows how easy it is to close one's mind to an argument. It is considerably harder, though, deliberately to cut oneself off from another person and the claim he makes on our good will.

JOHN COGLEY.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# THE STAGE

## THE LESSON OF THE MASTER

TO THAT MEAGER chronicle of art's high world of concepts and of life translated itself into art, "The Disenchanted" must be said to add only a melancholy statistic. Ironically, there would have seemed every precedent for hope: Mr. Budd Schulberg, upon whose novel of splendor in decline the play rests, is an unillusioned writer, copious and seasoned in experience; the wisdom, literary and human, of his collaborator, Mr. Harvey Breit, is as various as his sensibility is infallible and just. What is more, the substance they so earnestly search—those notoriously missing second acts in American lives—has become a specter of cultural anxiety. That the whole event should come off, then, so mildly, with no more stir than a morose disappointment, is perhaps less a comment on the authors than on the hazard of subduing to the uses of drama experience which may seem more accessible than the shock of investigation will prove it to be.

In a vehement note to the text, Mr. Breit, refusing to admit Manley Halliday of "The Disenchanted" as more than a dazzling prototype of Scott Fitzgerald, insists on the "absolute difference" between works of imagination and the marvels of reality; by the tests of the former only would he have the play judged. It is the artist's honorable position, but fatal, for the only honorable response to such a demand must be that imagination but lightly brushes this piece for the theater, and that its evocation of reality is most tenuous indeed; ghostly and bodiless, vagrant with old griefs, "The Disenchanted" is like some silent film played without titles or score. Some of this absence may derive from stage transmutation, which denies the play that factuality which often sustained it as fiction, and has imposed a dramatized remembrance of things past too poetically stylized for its strictly realistic structure. More may be due to a production unnecessarily remote, impersonal and without persuasion, as if someone were demonstrating a theatrical frigidity. Miss Rosemary Harris with her perverse glamour of evanescence, her arch and flagrant allure dwindling into a *gamine* wistfulness, colors and relieves the scene unfailingly, but the performance of Mr. Jason Robards, Jr., is of a piece with the occasion's monochromatic tone. That flint which is his talent's soul, and on which most incandescent and lacerating fires have been struck, is strangely damped, and in the absence of its light he can only wander through the role with a muddy doggedness I found cruelly baffling.

At the last, however, I should trace the fault to the nature of the experience Mr. Schulberg explores. Protest as he may, "The Disenchanted" derives its ultimate value from a particular amplified comment on Fitzgerald and the myth of the twenties. It was a flower of that moment—I remember it well, green-growing among the asphalt of Morningside Heights—when, under Mr. Lionel Trilling's tutelage, we had all discovered *manners*: images of reckless aristocratic grace sustained us in the cafeteria, and by the smutty subway kiosks, we dreamt of blue moths floating across Gatsby's gardens. Mr. Schulberg brought us grittily up to date, but as the Fitzgerald literature subsided to its just and high estate, it became evident that the *specific* conditions of his decay were hardly symptomatic, were indeed "only personal," as Gatsby said of Tom and Daisy; that the Fitzgerald *exemplum* fascinated, in any significant sense, only because of his talent, and that the problem, psychological and cultural, which divided him and which has variously afflicted Melville and Poe, Hawthorne, James, Miss Dickinson, Willa Cather, Twain, Hemingway, Mrs. Wharton, *everybody*—that this remained as much a mystery as ever. I cannot think that "The Disenchanted," novel or play, penetrates it; to do so would compel a more intricate and laborious search than the authors seem prepared to make.

We are led, finally, to an intuition ever more obvious and driven in: that the consciousness, glory and lament of the artist, as verbal or theatrical substance, is of its nature intractable, and close to the Greek conception of *obscene*. There may be a place for such images in literature, which itself feeds on the ideas, artifacts and theories of culture, but to hear this Manley Halliday speak of his grief and his pride is to have a sense of interior violation. One knows now why artists, well met, will talk of boxing, of cuisine, of cats or money or the iniquities of their fellows, but will tell so rarely of their art. "We work in the dark," Henry James said, "our passion and our task"—and if this event of "The Disenchanted," so sincere, so rigorous and ineffectual, may bring down the happy grace of darkness on what is at once sacred and unavailable, it will be remembered gratefully. (*At the Coronet.*)

RICHARD HAYES.

# THE SCREEN

## EGGS IN ONE BASKET

THEN suddenly it's the end of the year; and reviewers go scurrying to their typewriters to name their ten best. That number ten is rather arbitrary; but the custom itself is good. It allows readers to know where their reviewers stand; and it allows reviewers to be as personal as they like in naming their preferences. Although the movie industry was in a



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

state of jitters and transition in 1958 and turned out fewer films than usual (next year will probably see still fewer), they made enough good movies to keep thinking audiences interested, especially audiences who were more concerned with quality than with bigness. So without further ado and without listing them in the order of preference, I tap:

*Separate Tables.* For its compassionate story about a group of lonely people trying to communicate with each other, and for its fine, large cast in which Deborah Kerr, Wendy Hiller and David Niven are outstanding.

*The Key.* For being the best and most unusual of the year's plethora of war pictures and for Carol Reed's consistently good direction.

*He Who Must Die.* For the stirring religious themes in this French picture that is set in Greece but is international in scope.

*The Last Hurrah.* For producer-director John Ford's handling of this political portrait and for Spencer Tracy's superb performance as the elderly though still canny boss.

*Gigi.* For Vincente Minnelli's direction of his good cast in the year's best musical film which skillfully united its actors, story, music and Cecil Beaton's stunning decorations into a light and airy romp.

*The Defiant Ones.* For Sidney Poitier's good performance in a contrived though courageous movie about race relations in the United States and brotherhood everywhere.

*My Uncle.* For Jacques Tati's production, direction and utterly charming performance in a hilarious French picture that deplores the absence of human warmth in modern living.

*The Doctor's Dilemma.* For Anatole de Grunwald's extraordinarily handsome production, stemming from Shaw's play, which makes a talky movie but has brilliant, stimulating dialogue put over by a first-rate cast.

*Windjammer.* For Cinemiracle, the newest and best of the large-screen processes, which draws the audience into the action and in this case takes them on a thrilling voyage on a Norwegian training ship.

*Cat on a Hot Tin Roof.* For Richard Brooks' script, which, although it made changes in Tennessee Williams' play, caught well its concern with man's need for love and understanding, and also for Brooks' direction of a superior cast who effectively portrayed these themes.

That is ten, but the list could easily stretch to twenty as each moviegoer adds his own favorites. Even I wish I could still squeeze in Walt Disney's wonderful documentary "White Wilderness"; "Auntie Mame" for the fun Rosalind Russell is providing audiences; "The Old Man and the Sea" for its hymn to man's indomitable spirit; "The Horse's Mouth" for the fine performances by Alec Guinness and Kay Walsh; "Me and the Colonel" for Danny Kaye's portrait of a suffering but undefeated Jew: "The Quiet American" for its good acting and handsomely-photographed backgrounds in a story that deviated from Graham Greene's original but was still cerebral and exciting; "Witness for the Prosecution" for its slick telling of a slick mystery yarn; "Inn of the Sixth Happiness" for Ingrid Bergman's portrayal of a courageous missionary; "Pather Panchali" for its poetic cinema about life in India; "The Goddess" for Kim Stanley's acting in Paddy Chayefsky's provocative though not entirely successful portrait of a movie star. I could go on and on—but the list, like the year, must end. May 1959 be even brighter.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

# OF NOTE

## LITURGY AND MASS CULTURE

IN A RECENT issue of *Worship* (Collegeville, Minn.), Father Andrew M. Greeley discusses the relation of the liturgy to our society's cultural milieu. Substantial excerpts from his article are given below.

When the liturgical movement was confined to a few abbeys, a couple of schools and a handful of brave parishes it enjoyed certain strategic advantages. It could promise remarkable results if its suggestions were adopted, without being forced to offer too much in the way of concrete proof. But now that it has attained a moderate success and is spreading with some speed to more and more parishes, it is frequently called on to explain what certain critics think are failures of its promises.

No one could legitimately expect that a few dialogue or sung Masses would turn a parish into a living community; but even in those parishes where a rather full liturgical program is in operation, the "living parish" still seems to be in the far distant future. . . .

In his thought-provoking *Patterns in Comparative Religion* Mircea Eliade hints at the basic reason for this gap. He observes that the fundamental religious intuitions of the human race have not changed since the most primitive times. These insights may have at different times in history been elevated or depraved, they may have been set in vastly different contexts, but their essential content has remained substantially the same.

Thus the notions of the creating father in the heav-



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ens, the regenerative powers of water, the reverence due to sacred places, the importance of sacred time (especially the recurring year)—these appear in virtually all religions. (Of course the man of faith sees in these themes a providential preparation of all peoples for the revealed religion and believes that whatever Christian use was made of them was no more than a purifying and elevation of what was good in natural religion.)

On reading Eliade's chapters one cannot help but be struck by two facts: first of all, the remarkable manner in which the liturgy has employed these fundamental intuitions and, secondly, the total foreignness of such intuitions to a machine culture.

Most of the basic religious insights Eliade lists are closely connected with the world of nature, were conceived by men who lived very close to nature and can best be understood by men who are in tune with nature. In other words, man's religion through the ages has been primarily a religion closely connected with rural and agricultural activities (even if centered in a city).

But the inhabitants of modern urban centers are independent of the forces of nature and of agricultural and pastoral processes to a degree that was unthinkable in Rome, Athens, Babylon or even medieval Paris. Nature has little influence on their lives, at least little that they immediately perceive.

Rain is no longer the bearer of new life to the fields; it is something that can ruin a picnic in the countryside. The cold of winter does not represent very clearly a symbolic death, but it does make the commuter trains run less regularly and necessitates anti-freeze in the family car. Spring is less a rebirth than a time for the substitution of screens for storm windows. Thunder does not bring to mind the anger of the gods, but simply the failure of the weather forecaster. . . .

Heating and air conditioning systems make the changing seasons much less noticeable than they were in the past and, it is to be feared, weaken considerably the subtle pedagogy of the liturgical year. In fact, it is difficult to think of anything more foreign to the liturgical cycle than the cycle of the secular year in our society.

Both human religion and the Roman liturgy, in other words, came into being when mechanized urban living as we know it today was undreamed of. In so far as he is alienated from the world of nature, the city dweller seems also to run the risk of being alienated from much of the meaning of the liturgy. He simply does not and cannot get its full message.

If this were the full extent of the problem, the situation would be serious enough. But unfortunately it is much worse than would appear at first glance.

Modern man's mental and emotional processes are not merely foreign to the type of world from which the Roman liturgy has sprung; they are to a great extent under the influence of forces which are diametrically opposed to the spirit of liturgy. This becomes apparent if we compare the "sober and chaste rites" of the Roman liturgy with modern "popular" or "mass" culture. . . . .

The vast differences between the liturgy and mass culture are evident enough. . . . First of all, popular culture is basically sensual—it appeals primarily and chiefly to the senses. But since the senses are easily jaded if they are constantly bombarded by the same stimuli, mass culture must strive to produce ever bigger sensual effects. Screens get bigger, color gets brighter, sounds get louder and more pervasive. Vast technical skill is required to produce such effects and even greater skill is required to think up new ones.

However, the mass media are still managing to keep one step ahead of themselves. Sometimes the results are a little odd. If you would like to have the roar of an African lion in your front room, your stereo tape dealer will sell you a lion's roar which sounds more like the lion that does the lion himself. . . .

Secondly, the mass media, since they have only passing contact with their audiences and indeed very little with the audiences' intellect, must strive to produce quick effects. Little time can be wasted on details; the plot situation, the song's theme, the joke's point, the advertiser's message—all must be gotten across quickly or be wasted. Hence the products of the mass media tend to be ephemeral.

Since it is ephemeral, there is little opportunity for mass culture to have such depth. Even when it tries to deal with serious problems, it usually oversimplifies or even distorts them. The mass media can urge us to go to the "church of our choice" on Sunday, but does not dare offer much in the way of reasons for this advice.

The reasons for such monotonous standardizations are mainly financial. Most efforts of the mass media are extremely expensive to produce, and it is bad business, therefore, to experiment too much when you have achieved a successful formula.

Finally mass culture has little use for symbols. Its advertising branch is currently interested in creating a kind of symbol in "brand personalities" (e.g., the Marlboro man), but the approach is always direct rather than symbolic. There seems little point in using a symbol for a beer can when a picture of the can itself is just as easy to obtain. The mass media rarely find it wise to leave anything to their audience's imagination.

It takes but a moment's thought to see how different is the spirit of the Roman liturgy "with its grand simplicity, its sobriety hostile to all exuberance, fully matter of fact, speaking . . . without pretense or vanity or doubt or *hybris*." Where popular culture is sensual, the liturgy is restrained; where popular culture achieves



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

its effect quickly, the liturgy works slowly and subtly. Where popular culture is ephemeral, direct and standardized, the liturgy is profound, indirect and symbolic. . . . .

There are, in theory at least, four solutions to the problem—the maintenance of the status quo, the abandonment of modern civilization, the complete change of the liturgy, or some combination of the last two.

By definition the liturgical apostolate must reject the first solution. The second course, however, has proved attractive to many within the movement. . . . True liturgy, it is argued, is so foreign to machine civilization that the two can never be reconciled.

To the present writer this seems an unduly pessimistic view. A Church which claims to be catholic can hardly abandon a whole civilization which has been centuries in building and which has brought many unquestionable benefits (along with not a few evils) to the human race. The agricultural and pastoral religions had their beauty, one must admit; but one need only glance through a few pages of Eliade to see that peasant worship can become quite corrupt without any help from the big cities.

In the practical order, furthermore, it seems rather unlikely that any sizable groups of people are going to give up the comfort—and the intellectual facilities—of the big city for the dubious promises of the simple life.

Nor can we expect much from an attempt to somehow bring the liturgy into harmony with modern civilization and its mass culture. The Church is not going to abandon two thousand years of tradition to suit the moods of the habitual television viewer or the comic book addict.

The only practical course which remains is to change modern civilization while at the same time modifying the liturgy. Such a solution will not satisfy those who like simple answers, but it seems to be the course which the Holy See has adopted: on the one hand, it insists on the need for social reform and, on the other, authorizes considerable changes in the liturgy for "pastoral" reasons.

The process of this twofold change will of necessity be slow, but there seems to be no other way. . . .

# COMMUNICATIONS

## "PATTERNS OF VISION"

Johnstown, Pa.

TO THE EDITORS: Michael Novak's article, "Patterns of Vision" [Dec. 5], is essentially another observation on the problem of evil. This enigma which faces man in his temporal sojourn has been a stumbling block to faith since God first revealed Himself to men. St. Augustine was by no means the first to face this problem directly nor will the modern existentialists be the last.

What is surprising, though, is that Mr. Novak seems to have missed the Christian concept of sin. He does admit that God "accepts the unintelligibility thrown into history by unreason and malice," but he fails to add that God has set up the Church as His answer to evil.

The sinfulness of men is often disappointing and frequently discouraging, but it is by no means surprising and certainly presents no dilemma to the settled Christian conscience. Much of modern literature (Camus, Koestler, Joyce, Faulkner, etc.) is permeated with this so-called enigma, and consequently a good bit has been written in recent times to dispel misunderstanding. Modern Church historians have candidly exposed the evils of Church politics. Paul Simon in his *Human Element in the Church of Christ* openly delineated a few of the best examples of personal failures among Churchmen.

Perhaps the soteriological nature of the Church has been neglected too much. Yet it seems almost patently obvious that the Hebrew dispensation was a preparation for salvation and redemption, realized fully in Christ through His Church. Whether God the Son would have become incarnate without the sinfulness of men is a continuing dispute among theologians, but there can be no doubt that the Church with its sacramental system, the continuation of Christ's redemption on the cross, is essentially meant to share the life of God with the *sinner,* to save fallen man.

Nicolas Berdyaev looked forward to a developing revelation which would eliminate sin, and this same spirit seems to be producing a growing atmosphere of adventism which looks forward to heaven on earth or at least a literal realization of the millenium of the Apocalypse.

Pius XII clarified any doubt about this matter when he equated the Mystical Body and the Church. The Church is essentially the great "sacrament," the visible sign of redemption, the channel of God's life. It is meant for sinners. Sin is not a *problem* but a fact. It is a fact which has come about through the free will of men. God is not "open to failure and utter degradation," as Mr. Novak says, God has *encountered* sinful men through His incarnation. God has not been merely "open" to them. He has *exalted* them when they accept His helping hand.

Mr. Novak's friend in the Strategic Air Command has not faced a new conflict nor is he placed in a hopeless dilemma. He is faced with life. He has encountered the difficulties of a good life, but he is not without help. After all, the Church and its sacramental system was instituted for men such as he. That there are men who seem "to exercise the passion of idealism in



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

private, and then to face political facts brutally" is nothing new. The Sacrament of Confirmation was instituted explicitly for them.

We can lose confidence in men but not in God. The early Christians looked upon the Church from the ontogenetic viewpoint, as God's channel of salvation for weak mankind. Perhaps he would do well to concentrate more on the inner structure of the Church and develop a true Christian optimism.

*(Rev.)* PHILIP P. SAYLOR.

## REPLY

Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITORS: I hate to say that Father Saylor has not seen that it *does* matter, even in such a to-be-done as reading an article, "into which focus he casts his mind." Having crossed swords in charity with him before, I prefer to think that he is closing his eyes to the point of "Patterns of Vision" and leading me slyly out into a new terrain. "Patterns of Vision" is *not* essentially an observation on the problem of evil. It is rather an observation on the three basic positions a man can assume in facing any problem.

The first sees things as they should be, or will be at term, or can possibly be. The counter-position limits its vision to the unintelligible state in which things superficially seem to be. The synthetic position, standing above the other two and accounting for them and for more than either of them alone can manage, is willing to face things as they are, both with their present mixture of incomprehensibility and limited intelligibility, and their intelligible possibilities for tomorrow. It is a position peculiarly fitted to history and the things of history.

In replying, however, to Father Saylor's gentle prodding, it seems best to tackle first his difficulty with what I *said;* then secondly to step out with him for a moment to consider the fact of sin. Thus I suggest that, nearly paragraph by paragraph, Father Saylor is in his letter conceiving the Church as it is *when it reaches its term in souls.* Thus, when the Church finally succeeds in a given man, *then* "evil is answered," *then* the Hebrew dispensation is "realized fully" in the Church (at least in one more member), *then* God "has exalted" sinful man, *then* my friend will have seen and accepted the Church and the sacramental system God has sown in the world. Meanwhile, a realistic vision must look at both good and evil growing together, and look at them *as they grow.* Evil prowls about and our battle is still on; souls strive daily to become "more Christ"—He must increase, they must decrease; men *try* to be faithful to "God's helping hand"; my friend tries but *does not yet see* the sacramental system, neither in its objective beauty nor in its unimaginable offer to him. The Church of faith is never more than on-the-move. And yet—here is the wonderfully optimistic and seemingly contradictory thing—the battle *is* already won, in hope; we *are* already hidden with Christ in God, in faith; in Christ, we are already exalted and cry *"Abba!* Father!"; God already quite loves, embraces, surrounds, leads my friend. Father Saylor shares my faith, but I think he has not the same focus; my friend, I fear, lacks both.

In short, it *does* matter in what focus one looks. In a realistic focus, it is not enough to lay imperfect things (human instruments) alongside perfect ones (the divine nature of the Church); it is necessary to see that all things of history are on-the-move; the Church is trying to *fulfill itself,* by changing history as yeast does dough. The realism of faith, it is true, is even more daring: in Christ its Head the Church is already risen and ascended before God. But its members, *His* members, must first suffer a little—filling up His sufferings in themselves—before they shall also share fixedly

**HUNDREDS OF KITS ARE NEEDED . . .**

**by the missionaries, to relieve the sufferings of their people. One of these Kits, carefully designed for the most effective use, can be sent for a gift of $30. Many of the readers of The Commonweal have already accepted this opportunity. Will you not generously join that number? Send your gift to Rev. Edward F. Garesche, S.J., President, Catholic Medical Mission Board, Inc., 10 West 17th Street, New York 11, N.Y.**

**Seton Hill College**

Four-year liberal arts college for women. Regional and national accreditation. Pre-professional training for medicine, law, social service. Elementary and secondary teacher education; art, music, home economics education. 200-acre campus in foothills of Allegheny Mts. east of Pittsburgh. All sports.
**Catalog on request. Box K, Seton Hill College, Greensburg, Pa.**



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

His utter love before the Father, Head and Body at last united at their term. Christianity is as finalized and on-the-move as history, as life. In a way it has already succeeded: in the Head (our pledge) complete, in the members not yet.

As to the Christian concept of sin, I don't think I have missed it, though I doubt if it is ever wholly penetrable, this *mysterium iniquitatis*. Sin, cross, and resurrection are intimately connected. The pivotal point of the three is the cross. The most important is the resurrection. The fact that life is like it is: made greatly incomprehensible in itself by unintelligent and malicious actions thrown into it *for no good reason*—this fact is but the human situation. The cross, as pivot, (and hence of course the Church) does six things to this situation.

The outlining of these six ideas I take from Father Bernard Lonergan, S.J., of Rome: (1) The cross is a sign expressive of Christ's interior disposition towards us. (2) The cross takes evil (the unjust condemnation of innocence) and by heroic virtue wins the crown that, in this life, others too can triumph over evil by good, and that, in eternity, others too can share the "Love that moves the sun and moon and all the stars." (3) The cross illustrates how, realistically, the ill-willed actions of men can be stamped on the other side with heroic good will. Condemnation and injustice pale before sacrifice, which is the greatest love, the most beautiful thing, in the world.

(4) The cross illustrates the terrible mystery of life, that God too wishes to accept the unintelligibility of sin and suffer under it; and it illustrates what is no mystery at all: that we too accept the life we ourselves make difficult by our own prejudices, ill-will, resistances, egotistic demands. For Christ the cross is mystery, for us no surprise at all. (5) The cross is the analogy without equal of what God is like and what life is like: God's wisdom, loving kindness, transforming power, love. For out of men's evil comes heroic suffering in love, and resurrection into eternity. (6) The cross continues to trap the logicians—the utopians, the expedient, too—for it is a scandal and a stumbling block. In one same situation, evil and wrong-focus go their natural way and have their natural effects; good, by voluntary acceptance of life as it is, with love and trust, reverses the effects; and God the Father draws out the great and enormous fruit, the term of all this labor and travail: He raises His Son, Head and members, to before His Face for the eternal ages.

I submit that this statement reflects the Christian kerygma; that it is tremendously optimistic; that it is wholly realistic; that those who want evil *ended* and faith and charity (and the sacraments) automatically accepted simply have not a satisfactory focus—at least in theory—on how things are; that this statement merely repeats or elaborates what is already contained in "Patterns of Vision"; but that, after all, Father Saylor has succeeded in drawing me farther out into the terrain of the "fact of sin," the soteriological nature of the Church, and her real (and optimistic) inner springs. I am grateful to him for the opportunity.

*(Mr.)* MICHAEL NOVAK, C.S.C.

---

## MONKS AT RECREATION: 13TH CENT.

Just for a yuletide joke they seized upon
the simple Juniper and bade him tell
the morning's meditation. Unconfused,
with Caedmon tongue, this "fool" astounded them:

"Now that I have returned from Bethlehem,
Brethren, here by the holly branch that shades
this blaze of wonder in my eyes, today
I live the missal's liturgy again
illumined on the page—Epiphany.

Berries in hand, I ran the way to where
the shepherds led the royal Melchior (he
who offered myrrh) and Balthazar, who dropped
some incense grains unwittingly, like gems
of ruby, into tracks that Caspar's gray
old camel made.

Arriving at the cave,
not Joseph, but some casual host, arranged
the Magi's jars of gold and perfumed gum
and burned some of the frankincense to place
them at their ease.

I slunk in past the ox
and rolled my scarlet beads beneath the crib.
I heard the Wisemen speak with Joseph and
his Virgin-Wife familiarly; and when
they asked to see the newborn Prince, that man
in brown, the host, came near and lifted up
the Babe for them to kiss.

There, Brethren, with
these burning eyes I saw upon his hands
(for I stood close to Mary and could see)
like poinsettia stars, red blossoms; and
the same upon his feet—the petal prints
in sanguine etching.

Next I heard the Kings
give thanks for this kind courtesy received,
to Francis, singularly scarred." . . .

The monks were silent. The Umbrian skies
were bleeding with a stigmata of stars.

SISTER MARY HONORA, O.S.F.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# A Man With a Sense of Mission

PORTRAIT OF A PARISH PRIEST. By Lancelot C. Sheppard. Newman. $3.50.

By PHILIP DEASY

FORESEEING the inevitable, question, "Why another life of the Curé of Ars?" Lancelot Sheppard has provided two answers in his introduction to *Portrait of a Parish Priest*: first, the year 1959 will mark the centenary of the saint's death; second, Mr. Sheppard's conviction that the Curé of Ars "has more than a general lesson to offer for our days," one which, he adds, "I have endeavored to indicate without, I trust, pointing the moral too obviously."

Mr. Sheppard's first indication of what "the moral" is may be noted in the title itself of his book. The Curé of Ars, who often emphasized that few parish priests have been canonized, has been made the patron of parish priests, and another saint, Pius X, wrote, "God grant that every priest may follow his example." When the Abbé Vianney was assigned to the obscure French hamlet of Ars in 1818 it was to a country people to whom Christianity had become a dead thing. Few went to Sunday Mass; fewer to the sacraments. After ten years of what was to be in all a stay of more than forty years, the Curé had transformed Ars into a genuinely Catholic village.

If the Abbé Vianney, ungifted himself intellectually, and ministering to ignorant peasants, can yet be held up as an example, even and especially to today's parish priest laboring in an urban industrial civilization within which the formation of a truly adult Catholicism is imperative, it is surely for what above all else the Curé of Ars possessed: a sense of mission. He was, as Mr. Sheppard phrases it, "that uncomfortable type, the man with a mission." For a de-Christianized world, too, where the psychiatrist tends to supplant the priest as a healer of souls, the activity that most characterized the priestly life of the Curé can hardly be overstressed: his zeal in the confessional. For years he spent as many as eighteen hours a day hearing confessions, beginning often at one in the morning, or if the numbers were very great, at midnight.

Considering the tenseness, restlessness, and flight from the reality of life itself that have so often been noted as evidences of the contemporary world's disorder, Mr. Sheppard has another and more striking way of pointing up the relevance of the Curé of Ars for our day. Without implying the least disrespect or frivolousness, his book might also have been called *Psychoanalysis of a Parish Priest*. Night after night, for a period of over thirty years, the Curé of Ars had to endure mysterious manifestations or "visitations," of which the chief external signs were thuds, rappings, clangings, yells, knockings about of furniture, and shakings and disarrangings of the priest's bed. The Curé himself humorously referred to all this as the *Grappin;* the more serious accepted the phenomena as the enraged goings-on of the Devil himself trying to hamper the work of the saintly priest. This interpretation of the phenomena Mr. Sheppard finds unsatisfactory. His view follows the lead suggested by a Dr. John Layard, who thinks that "All true poltergeist phenomena are purposeful and probably caused by conditions of unresolved tension in the psyche of those involuntarily producing them." In his analysis of the *Grappin* manifestations as outwards signs of the interior conflict tormenting the Curé, Mr. Sheppard dwells on the three occasions before and the three after the Curé's ordination when the priest sought escape from his difficulties instead of courageously confronting them. In short, the Abbé Vianney had his own profound problems of adjustment, a condition with which most modern readers will find it easy to sympathize.

A final word of praise for Mr. Sheppard's writing skill is certainly in order. Readability is his forte, and rare are his lapses into those treacly and hyperbolic approaches that so often characterize the standard hagiographer.

# The Genuine Gallows Humor

CRAZY IN BERLIN. By Thomas Berger. Scribners. $4.75.

By WILLIAM JAMES SMITH

MR. BERGER'S novel of occupied Berlin is one of the finest and funniest to come along since the war. "Funny" deserves qualification. It is not another record of the dreary naughtinesses of military adolescents like *Don't Go Near the Water,* or the hillbilly corn of *No Time for Sergeants.* Mr. Berger is quite capable of making a joke about over-proportioned female anatomy, but without stirring up old echoes of Joe Miller. He manages, in fact, to be funny, and not a mere pusher of the laugh-buttons.

Along with Mr. Berger's funniness, however, runs another streak of humor which is strange and wonderful and a little "crazy." It is genuine gallows humor, which manages to laugh—and not merely to snicker hysterically—at some of the macabre realities of life in that weird city of destruction that was Berlin after the war. More remarkable, he does this without the cruelty or callousness that the circumstances virtually demanded of all but the most strong-willed. From the rubble Mr. Berger has dug up some of those strange indestructible people who survive everything — the crippled giant Bach, who fantasizes he was an SS-trooper, his half-Jewish wife, Lori, whom he has protected against the holocaust, her twin brother, a doctor who turned to the



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Communists for salvation and was literallly blinded by what he saw, and Schatzi, who learned in the concentration camps the lessons of survival at any cost. Mr. Berger's American characters have the same grotesque super-reality about them, his German-American hero Reinhart, whose attempts to understand the people he identifies with end him up in the "psycho" ward, his nurse-heroine, Veronica Leary, another physical giant, to Reinhart "like Europa and the ox with functions reversed." And Lieutenant Schild, a truly tragic character in a comic novel, who also makes the mistake of turning to the Communists for understanding.

As a novel *Crazy in Berlin* is in more than one way farcical. The "story" is preposterous, it gets going with the worst sort of wrong-footedness, it is extravagantly talented in irrelevant directions and has no idea when or how to stop. But its wild excesses may be part of its wild talent. Isherwood's *Berlin Stories* come to mind adventitiously but remain as a compliment to Mr. Berger, with much the same sort of piquant accuracy and sad drollery and more, in Mr. Berger's case, of artistic realization.

Mr. Berger has one sure sign of artistic maturity that is rare in a first novel. He is able, in the parlance of the theater, to "throw away" a line, or an effect, without cringing. Some of his funniest bits are slipped in so inconspicuously that you don't realize they are there until they begin exploding like a little chain of firecrackers. He begins by talking "beat," for example, in the slipshod jargon of that crew, and only gradually reveals a personality that goes much further.

More important than his odd verbal facility and his droll hand at story-telling is Mr. Berger's rare capacity for mixing social commentary and the novel in proportions that complement one another. This is a rare talent and one that should be cherished. I, for one, have paid Mr. Berger the ultimate reviewer's compliment—four dollars and seventy-five cents for a copy of my own to lend for proselytizing purposes.

# Bright Book of the Civil War

THE CIVIL WAR. By Shelby Foote. Random House. $10.

By JOHN COURNOS

THE SHOEMAKER should stick to his last, the novelist to his fiction. This reflection is engendered by Mr. Foote's "narrative," or rather by the first third of it (a little matter of over eight hundred pages), for two more hefty volumes are promised. In an autobiographical note Mr. Foote frankly boasts: "I am a novelist, and what is more I agree with D. H. Lawrence's estimate of the novel as 'the one bright book of life.'" This is a strange confession to make for a youngish Mississippian, already with five novels to his credit, basing his argument on the hypothesis "that the novelist and the historian are seeking the same thing: the truth—not a different truth: the same truth —only they reach it, or try to reach it, by different routes."

This is a fallacious idea, and if scholars permitted themselves to put it into practice we'd be a long way from the truth indeed. What a confusion of thought there is in Mr. Foote's statement: "Accepting the historian's standards without his paraphernalia, I have employed the novelist's methods without his license!" He confesses to having left out the footnotes on the ground that they would "detract from the book's narrative quality. . . ." But footnotes are the very thing the careful reader may want. He may want to know on what authority the author has made this or that statement and has drawn certain conclusions therefrom. For example, quite early in the book we have the insinuation that Lincoln wanted the attack on Fort Sumter, that he had in fact "more or less maneuvered him [Jefferson Davis] into firing the first shot," so that the South, it is averred, would be branded as aggressor "in the eyes of history and

THE GREATEST SHOW FOR THE HOLIDAYS IS
RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S
SOUTH PACIFIC
IN TODD-AO
FOR RESERVATIONS CALL CI 7-1633
Special Holiday Shows!
MORNINGS (Except Sun. & New Year's Day) 10:30 A.M.
MATINEES (Every Day) ..... 2:30 P.M.
EVENINGS at 8:30 P.M. .... Sun. Eve. at 7:30 P.M.
Rivoli
B'way & 49th St. • CI 7-1633
EXTRA!
THE MARCH OF TODD-AO!
See
The Most Solemn Ceremonies Amid The Splendors Of The Vatican
A Great Drama In Our Civilization
THE CORONATION OF POPE JOHN XXIII
Especially Photographed with TODD-AO Cameras
Fly
WITH JETS OF THE SIXTH FLEET
On A Spectacular Mission Over The Mediterranean
Join
In The Rollicking And Exciting Fun At The
BRUSSELS WORLD'S FAIR!
SUCH AN UNFORGETTABLE SHOW FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY CAN ONLY BE PRESENTED BY TODD-AO




LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Europe." There is nothing in the previous pages, however, to show this to be a fact. Is the Machiavellian idea in the author's own mind, a bit of novelist's license he has promised to shun?

"The novelist's touch"—a phrase which D. H. Lawrence, of all people, used derisively—is ever present. Thus: "On the one hand there was Davis, 'ambitious as Lucifer,' with his baleful eyes and bloodless mouth, cerebral and lizard-cold, plotting malevolence into the small hours of the night. On the other there was Lincoln, 'the original gorilla,' with his shambling walk and sooty face, an ignorant rail-splitter catapulted by long-shot politics into an office for which he had neither experience nor the dignity required."

In his portrayal of persons Mr. Foote most reveals his predilection as a novelist. Thus in describing Beauregard: "The Creole's big sad bloodhound eyes were rimmed with angry red and his hands were fluttering as he spoke." And on the same page he refers to Polk's "deep pulpit voice." At times he fascinates with backstage reports of conversations held in both Northern and Southern camps; they would be valuable if he didn't scorn the scholars, and supplied the necessary footnotes of sources to establish their authenticity.

ART

# The Happy Genius of Henri Matisse

IN THE MARVELOUS world of Henri Matisse art seems to grow with effortless lucidity under cloudless skies; such is the happy result of the great French intellectual tradition on an artist of the most exuberant natural talent.

It is true that the art of Matisse grows on sheltered ground, and this led to his being branded a pure hedonist (the French Communist poet Louis Aragon wrote an article about him called "Apologie du Luxe") but he himself, explaining that his work at the Dominican Chapel of the Rosary in Vence was in no way a gesture of repentance for his "pagan" art, declared: "I have always sung the glory of God and His Creation. I have not changed."

The Chapel may appear to be a radical and unique departure (any list of Matisse's other works reads like a catalogue of earthly pleasures) but it is in fact intimately connected with all his esthetic achievements, and only the *supreme* expression of his happy genius; in his statement entitled *La Chapelle du Rosaire* he describes this masterpiece as "the goal of a whole life of work . . . a life consecrated to the search for Truth." From his earliest original creations as "King of the Fauves" (1905-7) when he began his experiments with "pure" color and the "arabesque" line, to his very last synopsis (as it were) of those passionately pursued researchers (the "cutouts"), all the stages of Matisse's style are interrelated. In the chapel the realizations of these achievements in color and line are both stated separately and wonderfully fused: the colors of the stained glass windows are said to flood the somber calligraphy in the simple interior with a pure and joyful radiance.

At the consecration of the chapel in 1951 Bishop Remond summed up what should be thought of Matisse as the artist who gave Catholics this twentieth century *chef d'oeuvre*. He recalled the parable of the man who "having made the talents he received bear fruit, returns them to God on the day of accounting. . . . Then truly he deserves to be called: good and loyal servant."

It is wonderful that the eighty-four year life of Matisse drew to an end (he died in 1954) with a burst of creative activity that crowns his career; in addition to the Chapel (and as if it were not fitting to end with a climax) he furthermore began a series of new and delightful creations in *papiers collés* (or "cutouts") that tops off, for brilliance, *élan* and originality, the totality of his work.

These papers, colored in gouache, cut out, and pasted in compositions, are by no means a "topping" in the sense of whipped cream on a cake, but rather a coda to a great symphonic work. They

**REVIEWERS**

**Philip Deasy, a frequent contributor, is a member of the English faculty at St. Peter's College, New Jersey.**

**William James Smith is an editor of the magazine *Atomic Industrial Forum*.**

**John Cournos is a well-known anthologist and expert on Americana.**


***America's first and foremost periodical on the liturgy of the Church—***

I find that it is not possible for me to give adequate praise to *Worship* in the space alloted. It is sound and scholarly—but at the same time lively and direct. Probably most of its readers are priests, but it is written and edited for all Catholics.

The subject matter and purpose of the magazine do not vary from issue to issue: *Worship* is published to help people understand the Mass and the sacraments. Yet there is tremendous variety in its pages; perhaps the first and possibly the most valuable educational experience one gets from it is the realization of the ties between liturgy and life.

*Worship* treats of the social order, religious sociology, music, art, and architecture, of the psychology of modern man, the meaning of sacrifice, liturgical reforms, and of the participation of the laity in the prayer-life of the Church.

I said it was for "all Catholics," but there must be a reservation. Though *Worship* is "popular" in the sense of being non-technical, it asks serious work and some background of its readers. Given the work, the background could be derived (over a number of issues) from the magazine itself.

— Robert Hoyt in *The Kansas City–St. Joseph Register*

**$3.50 one year; $6.00 two years** **Ten issues annually - 64 pages**

**WORSHIP, St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minn.**




LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

are a synoptic expression of his dynamic line and pure colors and also a fresh departure in plastic composition. They allude to the decorative elements of the "odalisques," and they also allude, in a way, to Matisse's great collateral work in sculpture; but they have a peremptory form of their own. We are fortunate to have recently made available to us in splendid reproduction these last achievements of Matisse's genius, which like the flowers of some symbolic Eden fairly bloom on the pages of *The Last Works of Henri Matisse,* a Verve publication just published in America by Harcourt, Brace. Included is *La Tristesse du Roi,* the composition of which evokes Da Vinci by its eloquent triangular form. The nudes, acrobats, fruits and flowers succeed each other in shapes that are the very epitome of shape, in colors that are the essence of color. It should be added that the text by Pierre Reverdy (a poet) and Georges Duthuit (art critic, and Matisse's son-in-law) is both illuminating and delightful. The title of M. Duthuit's essay is "The Carver of Light," and in it he tells us that Matisse considered the cut-outs "a fresh start. Was it not the first time the technique of sculpture had been applied to painting?" This is perhaps an inflated suggestion, and he is more precise in describing Matisse by quoting Barrès: "one of those great artists who, when old, achieve the concision of an enigma or an epitaph."

No matter how effectively reproductions expand our knowledge of art and contribute to that "museum without walls" that Malraux has drawn our attention to, it is nevertheless true that only a considerable collection of "the real thing" can awaken the most powerful and intimate appreciation of an artist's work. We are therefore supremely fortunate in having such a Matisse collection in America (we in fact have *two,* but the still larger one at the Barnes Foundation in Merion, Pa., is not available to the general public) as the Cone Collection in the Baltimore Museum of Fine Arts, which is a perfect delight to see and a revelation of Matisse in early and mid-career, as represented by forty-three paintings, one hundred thirteen drawings and some excellent examples of his sculpture.

Although he was, of course, both a superlative draughtsman and sculptor, it is in painting and by his compositions in color that Matisse achieves his full stature. As one walks into the rooms of the Cone Collection one is dazzled by the impact of the Matisse paintings and exhilarated by the impression of the joy of life that they project. Here are: the famous *Blue Nude (Souvenir of Biskra,* a 1907 Fauve work, a powerful form drawn in heavy blue sinuous line); *The Magnolia Branch* of 1934 (a most *asleep* dog, lying under a table, seems to pin down the decorative elaboration of this interior); the early, famous *Woman in a White Turban* and the small, intimate portrait *Blue Eyes.* And of course there are several splendid *Odalisques* to contribute that final, eloquent note of *"luxe, calme et volupté."* BETTY KAUFMAN.


**College of Notre Dame of Maryland**
Baltimore 10, Maryland
*Conducted by the School Sisters of Notre Dame*
Fully Accredited
Program leading to A.B. degree
Arts and Sciences
Teacher Training Pre-Medical
*For catalog and further information address the Director of Admissions*

**LA SALLE Military Academy**
Foremost Catholic military preparatory school under Christian Brothers. Accredited college preparation. Grades 9-12. Small classes. ROTC highest rating. Beautiful 160-acre campus on Great South Bay. 75th year. Write for Catalog.
Box W, Oakdale, L.I., New York

**COMMONWEAL SUBSCRIPTIONS**
**Reduced Christmas Rates available until January 15**
**2 SUBSCRIPTIONS .....$15**
**3 OR MORE, EACH .....$ 7**

HELICON
**PIUS XII and the American People**
*By Vincent A. Yzermans*
The 'spiritual testament' of the late Pontiff to those Americans he loved so much—60 intimate talks to Americans —lavishly illustrated—handsomely printed. $4.75

■ **The Dead Sea Scrolls and Primitive Christianity**
*by Jean S. Danielou, S.J.*
"A thoroughly positive, cogently argued, scientifically accurate, interestingly and clearly written treatise giving the Catholic view on a subject widely debated and discussed at the present time."—*Virginia Kirkus* $3.00

■ **Prophet and Witness in Jerusalem**
*by Adrian Hastings*
"Treats the Third Gospel and the Acts together in such a profound, scholarly and interestingly dramatic way that it cannot fail in its aim to give a coherent picture of the total theological vision peculiar to Luke's narrative of Jesus and the early Church."—*Virginia Kirkus* $4.00

**HELICON PRESS** 5305 East Drive Baltimore 27, Md. *At all bookstores*

**Classified**

**Irish Books and Gifts**
• Books, Linens, Gifts, Catalogs.
IRISH INDUSTRIES DEPOT, INC.
870 Lexington Ave., (near 65th) New York

**Chesterton and Belloc**
• All Chesterton's and Belloc's Books
250 Titles, Free Catalogue.
Prosser, 3118 N. Keating, Chicago 41, Ill.

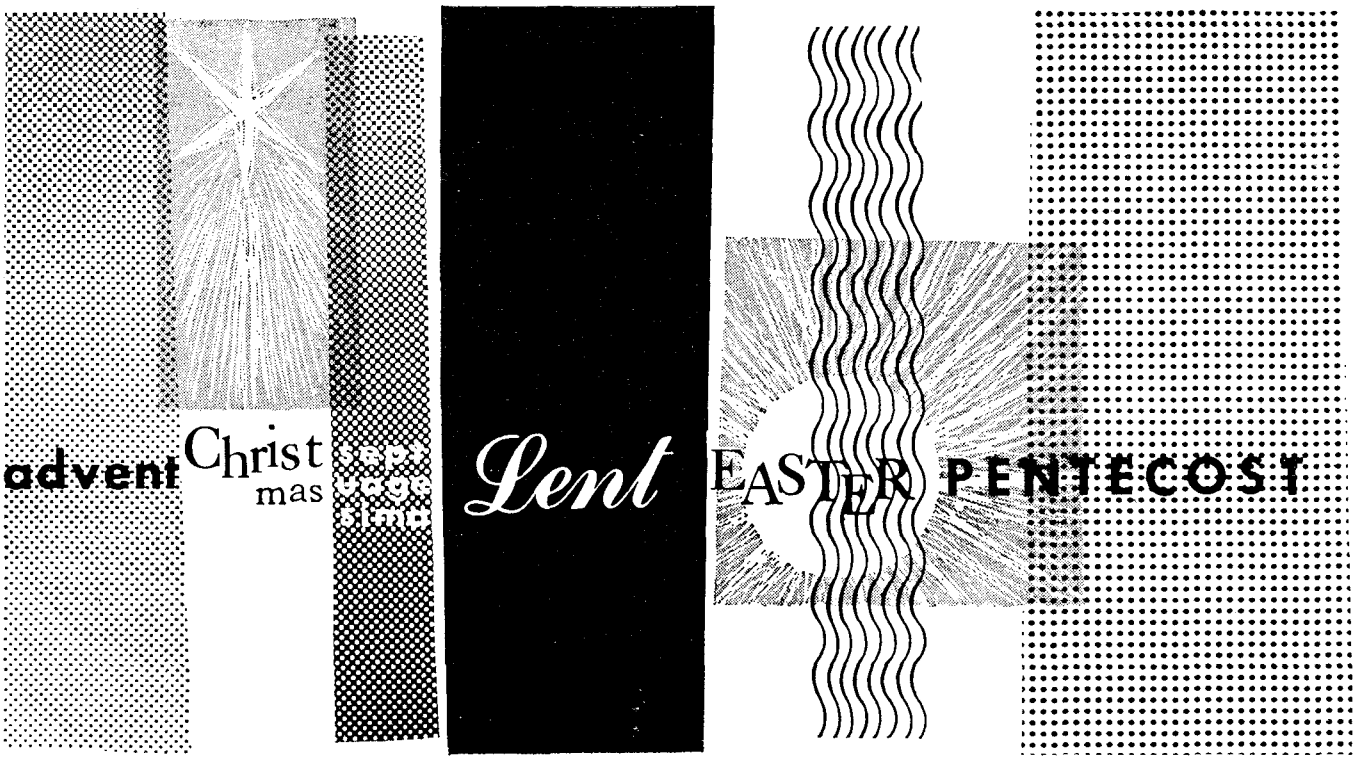
**Catholic Books**
• CATHOLIC BOOKS, NEW and USED
Free Lists, Free Search Service
C. F. PETELLE, Box 289, Maywood, Illinois

**Sleep Learning**
EXPERIMENT WITH "SLEEP-LEARNING"! Use your phonograph, recorder. Fascinating, educational. Catalog, details free. Sleep-Learning Research Association, Box 24-CW, Olympia, Washington.

**Advertising**
**Classified**
$1 a line (6 words)
Two-line minimum
**Classified Display**
$10.78 per inch (minimum)
Time discounts: 5% for 3 times, 10% for 7 times, 15% for 13 times.
Payable in advance except when ordered through recognized advertising agencies.
**The Commonweal**
386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N.Y.
MUrray Hill 3-9685




LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED




# "THE PRIMARY SCHOOL OF SANCTITY"

During the 19th Annual North American Liturgical Week the Church year was described as "the primary school of sanctity" . . . as "our sacramental school of holiness" . . . and as an "anticipation of the glory of eternity." The speakers further emphasized that its Christian Life seasons form one cycle—that of Christ.

A new Church year has begun.

To share in this daily life of the Mystical Body of Christ is necessary for all—and should begin early in life.

Boys and girls can and must be initiated naturally and understandably into the true spirit of the Church year . . . in a way that will help them want to live as full Christians.

Thousands of catechists, teaching boys and girls in religious instruction classes, have found valuable help in achieving this aim through the regular use of the weekly *Confraternity* **Messengers.** In these religious instruction weeklies, the Church year comes alive . . . Bible history is relived . . . the Catechism is translated into practice.

The theme of study this year in the **Young Catholic Messenger** (for grades 6-9) and the **Junior Catholic Messenger** (for grades 3-6) is the Commandments. **Our Little Messenger** (for grades 2 and 3) prepares children for First Holy Communion.

You can help your boys and girls appreciate this "primary school of sanctity"—the living of the Church year. Have them read and study their own editions of the *Confraternity* **Messengers** in your religion classes. (Sample copies on request.)

GEO. A. PFLAUM, PUBLISHER, INC.
38 WEST FIFTH STREET, DAYTON 2, OHIO

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED